THE PROPHET DAY NUMBER

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

448

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Hazrat Mirza
BASHIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD AHMAD
Head of the Ahmadiyya Community

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The
Review of Religions

Vol. XXXI NOVEMBER, 1932 No. 11

THE PROPHET DAY

The present number of the *Review of Religions* is in commemoration of 'the Prophet Day' which will be celebrated throughout India and in many foreign lands on the 6th November. It is a source of perennial satisfaction for all well-wishers of the peace, prosperity and progress of India that the celebration of 'the Prophet Day' is becoming increasingly popular with all sections of the Indian people. This movement was set on foot by the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community to ease the tension that now exists between the Hindus and the Muslims. This tension has its origin in the fact that books have for the last 30 years been written and pamphlets issued by some Hindu writers and publicists (who see in the harmonious and cordial relations between the two communities the destruction of their own sinister programmes), in which the Prophet Muhammad has been most callously abused. This denunciation and abuse of the Prophet is evidently based on wrong and imperfect knowledge about his character and doings. The Head of the Ahmadiyya Community rightly thought that the bitterness existing between the Hindus and the Muslims could not disappear unless such books and pamphlets discontinued to appear and that they would not cease to appear unless those responsible for their publication were provided with true and genuine historical facts about the Prophet. It was with this sublime and noble purpose that he inaugurated this movement and we are very much gratified to find that this object has been largely realized by classes of people. When, however, the present movement succeeds to the extent to which the Mirza Sahib wishes it to succeed he intends to inaugurate an 'All Prophets Day'. On that day the leaders of religious thought in the country will speak from the same platform on the inestimable services rendered to the cause of humanity by the Founders of various religious systems. In this way our people will learn to appreciate and admire faiths other than their own and thus will be completely eradicated that communal ill-feeling which is the most formidable obstacle in the way of the achievement by India of its great goal and without whose eradication, even if India gets self-government, social progress will continue to be hampered and impeded.

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MUHAMMAD THE KINDRED OF HUMANITY *

By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Head of the Ahmadiyya Community.

For several days I have been suffering from fever and cold, and being thus indisposed, I thought I should not be able to address this meeting in Lahore on the holy subject of the Life of the Prophet of Islam—a subject which is holy and important not only to Muslims but is full of value to all classes of people whatever their religious persuations. And I would not have come to address this meeting, but for certain circumstances which led me to think that notwithstanding my throat and my fever I ought to try and address a few words to you, it may be in a feeble or in a loud voice, or for a short or a long time.

Prophet's Day

So I made up my mind to try and address this meeting in the centre of our province in order, among other things, to explain the *raison d'etre* of the Movement for the Annual Celebration of Prophet's Day which it was given to me to initiate some years ago.

Several people have subjected me to the charge that many disorders - communal and others—which have appeared amongst us, have been in one way or another, due to me. In an age of freedom of thought and opinion and in the face of the clear teaching of Islam itself, everybody, I think, has the right to hold whatever belief or opinion he wants to hold; so that those who think that I have been responsible for at any rate, some of the disorders which have appeared in our province, have the right to continue to think as they do, until they are satisfied that what they think has no foundation in fact. But, just as they are free to hold whatever view they like about the motives which prompted me to inaugurate this movement, equally so am I free to act according to the light of my own

* Translated by Mr. Muhammad Aslam B. A. (Cantab.)

conscience and to do what I believe is in our highest interest.

In recent years communal relations have become so degenerate, that in the wordy wars which the communities constantly carry on, they do not even spare the religious celebrities of one another, the consequence being that not only have religious relations become strained, but social relations have also suffered, and we have the kind of estrangement between communities with which we are so familiar to-day. I gave a most anxious thought to this state of affairs, and wondered if it was possible for me to effect an improvement, it may be ever so slight, in these relations. As I thought, it occurred to me that what I could do as a Muslim, was to initiate a movement by means of which we could invite every year, members of other communities to pay their respective tributes to the life and work of our Founder, Leader and Guide in matters both religious and temporal, I mean the Holy Prophet of Islam. True, there are those in other communities who can find nothing but faults in this holy life. But equally, are there those—and they I think are more numerous—who are prepared to acknowledge some of the obvious points of excellence in our Prophet. It was my purpose to get together people of this kind, to induce them to come forward, and assure Mussalmans that while there are amongst other communities, those to whom the enumeration of the 'faults' of our Prophet is an act of the highest merit, there are also those who hold in genuine respect, not only the personal excellences of our Prophet but also the great services he rendered in the widest interests of humanity. When Musalmans are so assured, their angered temper generated by the belief that other communities do not hold their Master in respect, will become calmed down, helping, thus the growth of better communal relations in the country.

An All-Prophets' Day

To invite prominent non-Muslims to pay, in public meetings, their tributes to the Holy Prophet of Islam was then, the first step I took, I have since come to think, however, that other

communities have an equal right with us, to demand that we Muslims should come forward and speak in public meetings on the excellences of their respective religious leaders. It should not take long to create and meet this demand, so that, at no distant date, we may hope to assemble on the same platform leaders of different denominations and get all of them to speak on the points of goodness in the lives of the religious founders of one community and another. When Hindus and Sikhs express themselves reverently about our Holy Prophet, Musalmans would do the same about Hindu and Sikh teachers. Indeed they will not find it difficult to do so, because they have been taught that all the great religious teachers the world has known, have had great points in them, and that there has not been a people to whom God has not sent a Prophet. If according to Islam all nations have had teachers appointed to them, Muslims will readily participate in meetings convened for the purpose of showing reverence to Founders of all the Great Religions. When common meetings of this kind are held in large numbers, I am certain that communal relations will become far better than they are. Indeed we may hope eventually to live and move in an atmosphere of amity and truth, much as we live and move to-day in an atmosphere of hatred and falsehood.

I do not think there is a single person who will not find any merit whatever in the Founders of Religious Communities other than his own. If such there is, he is living in an atmosphere of falsehood. I for one, have not opened the sacred book of any religion without finding some great excellences in it. In fact I believe that when anything loses all its good points and becomes completely bad, it loses all chance of surviving in this world. God Himself brings about its destruction. Even about such things as intoxicants, we read in the Quran, that they have their value. Only their vice is greater than their value. A religion which recognises the value even of intoxicants can hardly deny the excellence of those religions which in their time, have inculcated the

observance of moral limits on the part of human beings, and have succeeded in preventing the transgression of those limits. It will be a blessed day for India 'therefore' when peoples belonging to different communities will have given up the habit of finding faults with one another's great ones, and will have acquired instead, the habit of searching for their, excellences.

A Word to Hostile Musalmans : Did you Open my Heart ?

One more point, before I proceed. There are amongst Muslims some, who think that it is none of my right to initiate and to organise a movement for the celebration of the life of the Holy Prophet in the manner in which it is being celebrated to-day. For, they think, I am not of those who have in their hearts a true love for the Holy Prophet of Islam. I think that those who hold such a view should have minded the words of the Holy Prophet himself, " Did you open his heart and see it ? " There is not a greater injustice in the world than to attribute to a person things that he does not himself hold. But even supposing that what is said of me is true, has not the Holy Prophet said that even sinners sometimes prove serviceable to God's religion ? If an atheist came to me and admired things that I admire, I should rejoice that the light which I follow has spread, so far and wide, that even a scoffer has been compelled to acknowledge it. Similarly if my heart is devoid of the love which I profess for the Holy Prophet, you have all the more reason to rejoice, inasmuch as, even one like me is being compelled openly to concede the greatness and the goodness of the Holy Prophet of Islam. The Holy Prophet himself reported enthusiastically the things which non-Muslims used admiringly to say of him. When he was in Syria as a young man, he had certain good things said of him by a Christian who met him, and these the Holy Prophet himself reported to his companions. If it is said therefore, that one who does not think completely with you, has no right to say anything in admiration or reverence of the Holy Prophet, it will be counter to the practice

of the Holy Prophet himself. Moreover if only those who think entirely with you, are to have the right at all to admire him, good natured persons in other communities who would otherwise like to say many good things about our Holy Prophet will have their lips sealed, and when their lips are sealed they will soon have their hearts sealed as well.

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Subject of this Discourse

I intended when I was well, that I should speak to you on the ideals which the Holy Prophet entertained in regard to the Functions of Government—this being a subject of great importance at the present time, but I had to give up the idea as I did not think my present physical condition would be able to stand the strain of a lengthy discourse. I propose, instead to present to you an account of some of the great qualities of the Holy Prophet's character which are set forth in a verse of the Holy Quran. This verse is full of tremendous significance but as I do not propose to go into too many details, I hope that whatever I want to say will be said in a short time.

FIVE GREAT EXCELLENCES OF THE HOLY PROPHET

In that Quranic verse God says:

> "Certainly an Apostle has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your distress; exceedingly solicitous is he for you; and to the believers, compassionate merciful." (IX, 128)

It is a short verse but even so, it embodies five great qualities of the Holy Prophet. In the first place, God speaks of him as Apostle. In the second place, as an Apostle who has been raised from amongst ourselves. In the third place, as one for whom it is hard to bear the pain of others. In the fourth place, as one who is supremely anxious for the welfare of human beings. And in the fifth place, as one who is compassionate and merciful to those who accept his teachings.

FIRST GREAT EXCELLENCE

Muhammad--a Rasul

The first great quality of the Holy Prophet then, is that he is an Apostle. The Arabic word *Rasul* means one who has been sent. This one word *Rasul* points an aspect of the life of the Prophet which ordinarily remains hidden from many observers. It is a disregard of this aspect which has led many European writers to make unfounded attacks on his life. What aspect is this? It is that as a *Rasul*, as one who was *sent*, the Prophet himself had no ambition for greatness or for rising above others, and becoming their leader. He never aspired to other people's admiration. On the other hand he took care to remain in the background, so that worldly greatness should not come to him except if it was the express purpose of God, that this should be so. Even before he announced his claim to being an Apostle of God he had all the qualities, the possession of which constitutes greatness in any human individual. Truthfulness, courage, fortitude, fellow-feeling, kindliness, love, sociability, determination, thoughtfulness, a passion for the advancement of people, in short all the great qualities which have ever been possessed by any leader of human beings were together possessed by him singly. He had one and all of those powers which whether he was Apostle or not would have raised him to the leadership of the world. Yet it cannot be said of him that he ever wanted to use those powers in order to achieve personal greatness. He had those powers in an extraordinarily large measure, yet he did not spend his time striving for political, intellectual or economic leadership, but in the contemplation of the true Beloved, in the solitude of the cave *Hira*. We cannot but admit therefore that the Holy Prophet notwithstanding the possession of all kinds of talents and powers, never strove for personal success or individual greatness. For full forty years he remained in the back-ground, and if after waiting so long, he did come to the fore-front, it can only be due to a constraint and compulsion which must have come from without and not from within him. As God has said, " an Apostle has come to

you ..." It means that when the Holy Prophet presents to his people, revelations which he has received from the Divine Being it is not because he is working for any personal ambition. It is because he has been compelled by God's urgent command to do so.

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Apostles Other than Muhammad

In this respect however, our Holy Prophet is like the other Prophets known to history, so that nobody should find it difficult to understand the distinction which the Holy Prophet possessed as an Apostle of God. Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Budha, and Zoroaster have all been accepted by one people or another, as persons who were constrained to come forward and lead their people. Why can they not say the same about our Holy Prophet?

Budha and Moses

Of the great teachers who have had their advent in India, Budha provides an obvious example. Our learned Hindu friend, Lala Ram Chand Manchanda, who has spoken before, has complained that Hindus and Musalmans make no effort to understand one another. As far as I am concerned I want to assure him that I have studied Hindu Literature as much as I have been able to do. I do not know Sanskrit but under this limitation I have made a fair study of Hindu literature, not with a view to find faults in any of the great Hindu teachers, but with a view to discover their good points. I have made a study of the *Vedas*, of the *Gita*, of the *Ramayana*, and of the teachings of *Gautama Budha*. I have found good things in all of them. I entertain different beliefs, but I cannot help saying that those teachers hold a high place in the history of the world and their contribution to its advancement is very great indeed. Take Gautama Budha, for example. When he left his home, his beloved wife was asleep. He did not even wake her up to say good-bye to her, lest her loving eyes should keep him from going out. He left his hearth and home with the determination not to return

until he had found God. Would there be a Hindu or a Musalman so hard-hearted as not to have his eyes bedewed with tears on reading so tender a story as that of Gautama Budha? He went wherever he could. In Gaya where he had attained to a great spiritual eminence, people would come to him and ask him to accept them as his devotees. But he continued to refuse until the word of God raised his brooding head and told him to go forward and preach to the people. In the same way, Moses occupied a position of dignity and respect amongst his people. Nevertheless, he did not aspire for leadership. In fact when he received God's summons he submitted that the Divine Commission had better been entrusted to his brother Harun. It was when God finally chose him, and not his brother, that Moses consented to come forward. Similarly when the first revelation came to our Holy Prophet saying, "Read!", he replied "I cannot....". We know from the commentaries that the Holy Prophet, at the time of the revelation, was not presented with anything to read. He was only asked to repeat certain words. But it was only after Gabriel had repeated three times the divine injunction to read that the Holy Prophet gathered courage to do so. All this meant that he himself was not aspiring for leadership. It was God who wanted to make of him a leader for all the world, and if God so wants, who is there to stop Him? In this respect, our Holy Prophet, so closely resembles the teachers of other religions that if their followers take but a glance over their lives, they will at once realize that this aspect of the life of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) classes him with the Apostles of God, not with the men of the world.

SECOND GREAT EXCELLENCE

One of Ourselves

The second great quality which the verse has pointed out is contained in the words "*from among yourselves*" On a superficial view, to be "from among yourselves" may seem a minor attribute, but on reflection it turns out to be an attribute which serves to distinguish the Holy Prophet from the other

teachers of the world. The purpose which all teachers have proclaimed of their advent, is that they should lead their people to righteousness and serve them as exemplars of moral conduct. It is obvious that an exemplar to be a real exemplar, must experience the urges and the constraints which all men have to experience, and confront the conditions which they have to confront. Without these, he will be ill-fitted to be an exemplar to others. It was because of this that Christians were led to believe that though Jesus was the son of God, and was therefore, in a way, himself God, yet he came to the Israelites in human form. For without even the externals of humanity about him, he could hardly have served as an exemplar to human beings. Similarly, the Hindus have been led to believe that the Avatars or Incarnations of God come to us in human form or in the form of other creatures, so that they should become exemplars to ordinary creatures. It seems therefore that all religions are agreed that one who is to be an exemplar to any class must be one of that class, though as a member of that class there would be a world of difference between his powers and the average powers of the class. Here then is the point of this great attribute of the Holy Prophet pointed out in the words ' from among yourselves '. In another place in the Quran, God enjoins on Muhammad to say, " I am but a man, like any of you". This means that the conditions which confront ordinary human beings individually, have been in their entirety reproduced in the life of Muhammad whose career therefore is a pattern for all human beings.

A Many-Sided Life

It is in this respect that our Holy Prophet has risen above all other Prophets. There can be no denying, for instance, that Jesus was a true and a great Prophet of God, but we cannot say that he was or could be an exemplar to all times and all kinds of people. We know that Jesus did not marry. He cannot therefore, serve as an exemplar to married people, in the problems and responsibilities of domestic life. Nor did he become king that kings to-day could claim him as one of

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themselves and as an exemplar to them in the problems of government. But Muhammad, we have been told, is *one among ourselves.* Among the poor, poor ; among the rich, rich ; among the kings, a king ; among the subjects, a subject ; and among the oppressed, an oppressed one ; in short, he is one among ourselves whatever our conditions or circumstances. It seems as though God, in this verse, has addressed all mankind and said, " O, my people whatever your calling, rank or position there is none amongst you whose peculiar conditions have not been reproduced in one form or another, in the life of Muhammad the Prophet. Whether a king or a subject; whether in authority over others or of those whose lot it is to be oppressed ; whether of those who are married and have to look after the young ; or of labourers, farmers or traders ; in short, whatever your calling or station in life, ' We ' says God ' have most certainly sent to you an apostle from amongst one and all of you.' Let none amongst you think that Muhammad would not know the peculiar difficulties of his station or function. Let not kings think that Muhammad would not know the difficulties and dangers kings have to face, nor let the oppressed think that Muhammad would not know what it is to suffer oppression. Muhammad has had the experience of all conditions of human life. He has had occasion to know first hand the difficulties and desiderata of all classes of people; he has had the opportunity to appreciate the inner-most feelings of all of them. Being rich in the experience and the vicissitudes of life, he offers himself as a guide to you *all*, and in respect of *all* the conditions that human beings have to live under.

The Prophet's Childhood

Take his earlier life. He had to experience the lot of an orphan. His father died before he was born, and mother died when he was quite young. But living first under his grandfather, and later under his uncle, he showed how an orphan should conduct himself. An orphan either grows to be petted and spoilt, or growing under a sense of oppression, he becomes a despairing, despondent child. If he is living with

people who think far too much of him, their indulgence will indeed spoil him. On the other hand, if he lives with people who take him for a stranger and treat him unkindly, he will tend to get disheartened, and develope a gloomy out-look on life. Placed in so delicate a situation as a child, he displayed a remarkable character. His companions of those days tell us that he had excellent table manners. He would not spring upon things to eat, but would wait aside with dignity. Not until his aunt sent for him, would he come forward to take his share of the food of which he would then partake with the same dignity which characterised the rest of his bearing as a child. His foster-mother has reported that he was so good natured that even his fellow children were impressed by him. His foster-brothers have reported that he took no part, in vain and wasteful sport. He had his juvenile pranks but he hated being anything other than truthful. He was so full of sympathy for his fellow children that even at that age they regarded him as a sort of chief. His early life, in short, was so pure that the most bigoted European writers have had to admit it. They have, no doubt, suggested that goodness of such a high degree in a child, denotes an abnormal and, as it were, an unsound mind. But that is only an after-thought. And in any case, it is an explanation of his juvenile goodness which we have reasons to discount. The truth therefore is that Muhammad was an extraordinarily good child.

Relations with Abu Talib

He loved his guardians and conducted himself with affection towards them. The way he regarded his uncle Abu-Talib, is hardly equalled even by one's own children. After the fall of Mecca, when he was asked in which house he would reside, he remarked lovingly "Has Aqil left a house that we might rest in one of our own?" He meant that his cousins had sold all their ancestral dwellings. He loved Abu-Talib as he would have loved his father. He taught his followers not to say a word in contradiction to their parents, his own conduct in this respect, being an embodiment of his teaching.

There is a remarkable incident belonging to the years after he had announced his claim to being an Apostle of God. The Koraish Chiefs warned Abu-Talib that if he would not stop his nephew Muhammad from preaching, he himself would have to suffer for it. Abu-Talib got upset over the warning. When Muhammad came home, the uncle thus addressed him, "My boy, the Chiefs of Mecca have warned me. Is it not possible for you somehow to conciliate them?" The Holy Prophet was never more depressed than he was at this moment. There was on the one hand, one who had tended him with loving care, whose slightest mishap Muhammad would not be able to bear, being threatened with disgrace and dishonour by a whole community; there was on the other, his duty to proclaim the truth as had been Communicated to him by God. Muhammad could not contain himself any longer. He wept and said, "Uncle, I can stand every conceivable torture, but I cannot stop proclaiming the message of God". Abu Talib knew well that Muhammad would never stop proclaiming, not even if he had had to shed the last drop of his blood. So, on hearing his nephew's firm reply, he himself became firm, and said, "Go your way, my boy. Do not spare proclaiming the word that God has sent you. I am with you." This is how he acquitted himself as an orphan and could anybody have acquitted himself better?

The Prophet's Youth : The Trusted One of his People.

Now as to the period of his youth. Youth is typically the period of lack of self-restraint. In the Arabia of those days, there were no laws that had to be observed, no moral code that was considered more or less binding on human beings. There were those who prided themselves on having illicit connections with the wives or daughters of others. It is obvious that young people, living in such an environment cannot show any high degree of restraint. But the Holy Prophet living in an environment of such abominable laxity, displayed such an excellent character as a young man, that people gave him the

title of Al-Amin and Al-Saddooq. To say that he did not lie is to insult him. For he was so ideally truthful that it is impossible to find a parallel to him. Also, we must remember that the positive virtue of truthfulness is far higher than the negative virtue of never telling a lie. His excellence consisted not so much in the fact that he never told a lie but rather in the fact that he never said anything other than what was positively and strictly truthful. He concealed nothing, kept nothing, and made no attempt to circumvent anybody. That was why his word was accepted as soon as it was uttered. Even Christian biographers have had to concede that his early life was a strictly truthful life. He asked the people of Mecca, "Would you believe me, if I told you that you are in imminent danger of being attacked by an army behind this mountain ?" And to a man they said, they would. Yet the part of the country of which he spoke was an open waste, and from over the hills of *Safa* and *Merwa*, they could run their eyes over long distances. To believe anything that they were told about it merely because it came from the lips of Muhammad, simply meant that they were willing to distrust their own eyes, but not distrust the words of Muhammad. It was possible their eyes were wrong. But it was not possible that Muhammad was wrong. When all agreed that they would accept his word, he announced that God had sent him for their regeneration, and that they ought to accept him. But when he said this, they would not have him.

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Of his strict truthfulness we have the testimony of an arch enemy of his. When the Meccans apprehended that Muhammad would win over some of the pilgrims visiting Mecca for the Haj, they began to forge plans by which to prejudice all visitors against him. One said, "Let us proclaim him to be a poet." Another said, "No, not a poet, but a simple liar." Still another, "No, neither a poet nor a liar but a mad man." Upon hearing all this, an unrelenting enemy of his, one whose hostility remained unabated to the end of his days, intervened and said "You can only say something that can make a plausible impression on the people. When, for instance, you describe

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Muhammad as a liar, would not the people ask, 'Then why have you, for so long, sworn by his sincerity and truthfulness ?' How can a man who has been truthful all his life, suddenly turn out a liar ? You have to forge a plausible account about him." But they could forge no such account.

The Holy Prophet has himself told us that on two occasions during the period of his youth he desired to go to an entertainment such as a juggler's performance. But it was so ordained that on both occasions instead of being able to carry out his desire he went off to sleep. His youth, in short, was as pure as the rest of his life, unequalled by anybody known to human history. Nor is the Prophet one of those heroes, the facts of whose lives are not well-known. There is nothing in his life which we should like to know and of which a fair account is not preserved for us in the traditions.

Daring Solicitude for the Poor

Let us now turn to another point. Let us describe the moral side of his character and the solicitude he had for the poor and the down-trodden. In this respect too, we cannot find his equal in the entire history of man. It is said that some Meccans got together and founded a League whose purpose was to protect the rights of the poor. As the names of most of its founders end with Fazl, the inauguration of the League is known in history as the Hilf-ul-Fazul (or the Oath of the Fazul). The Holy Prophet was also one of the founders of the League. This was before he had been called to prophethood. Later, on one occasion his companions asked him as to what the oath was about. The Holy Prophet understood at once that what they wanted to know was how he, a Prophet divinely appointed to lead people could have joined a League in which he must have had to work under others. So he answered, "The idea of this League is so dear to me that if it were to be initiated even to-day, I should gladly join it". In short, when it was a matter of serving the poor, the Holy Prophet was not ashamed of working under others. A poor man had some money owed to him by Abu Jahl. Not caring

much for the poor Abu Jahl did not seem anxious to pay it off. The poor man went one after the other to the leaders of the League who had taken the famous Oath, and asked for the restitution of his loan. None of the leaders however dared to approach Abu Jahl. So the man at last went to Muhammad, who was then a Prophet, and said, "You are one of the leaders who took this oath to protect the poor. Why not then ask Abu Jahl to make good the money he owes me?" This was the time when Abu Jahl had declared Muhammad an outlaw and had put a prize on his head. Everybody in Mecca was a declared enemy of the Prophet. Yet the Prophet without a scruple, went right up to Abu Jahl's house and knocked at his door. Abu Jahl enquired, "Who is there?" The Prophet replied, "Muhammad". Abu Jahl was startled; he wondered as to what might be the case. He opened the door at once and asked, "Is anything wrong?" The Prophet answered, "Why do you not pay off this poor man?" at which Abu Jahl said he would presently do so. So he went in and brought the money. When Abu Jahl's friends heard of it, they made fun of him, and taunted him saying he had been afraid of Muhammad. But Abu Jahl protested and said, "Would you not believe me? As soon as I opened the door I saw as though Muhammad had two wild camels with him, one on his right and the other on his left, and the beasts seemed ready to run at me". It may be that it was a miracle. But whether it was so or not, all of us know that truth has its own terror. Abu Jahl was simply overpowered by truth. The point however is that in order to restore to a poor man his due, the Holy Prophet did not hesitate to put his own life in danger. He thus demonstrated what moral courage, even without power and means, man can show.

The Prophet's Unquestioned Trustworthiness

When he married Khadija he was absolutely without means. Some have reported, that his father left to him five goats and one or two camels. Others have said that he inherited nothing at all from him. In any case, even if he had some property left to

him, it was as good as nothing at all. But born in want, he never seemed really to want anything. His satisfaction with whatever he had was complete, though situated as he was, he might easily have desired the things he did not have. He was called Al-Amin *i. e.*, the Trusted One. It is possible that in Lahore itself there are hundreds of persons who can be trusted with the safe custody of other people's belongings. Yet none of them would be titled Al-Amin. The title Al-Amin would be given only to him who demonstrates his trustworthiness in and through all kinds of ordeals. If a man has a lakh of rupees it is no great virtue on his part if he can be trusted with a thousand. The Holy Prophet was at grips with terrible poverty and lack of means, yet he was trusted with the safe custody of both life and property, and he proved through his conduct that he was contented with what he had and unmindful of what he did not have. Indeed but for this, he would never have been honoured by his people with the distinguished title of Al-Amin. And later when he had all the wealth he could desire he continued to live a poor man as before. On one occasion he was distributing money between the poor. In the course of it, he dropped a *dinár* and forgot to pick it up. He went to lead prayers in the mosque. As soon as he had finished he got up, a l at once, and forcing his way across rows of worshippers went straight home. On his return the bewildered companions enquired, "What was the matter O Prophet of God". He answered, "I had dropped a *dinar*, and having remembered it, I wanted to give it away as soon as I could."

Nothwithstanding his wealth, he lived as one of the poor. Some of his poor companions complained of the richness of others. On this the Prophet smiled and touching their shoulders said, "Do you not like that you and I should belong to the same class". He had ample wealth but he was so contented without it that we cannot but wonder when we think of it. Whatever he had, he would give away in the name of God. His household was without means. Aisha reports that for months and months they

would have nothing to cook and would live on dates and milk, unless, of course, some neighbour thought of sending them some food. Often they had to go without food of any kind. This would happen, remember, when he was growing in wealth and prosperity. It is amazing therefore, that Christian writers should have found fault with this very period of the Prophet's life. It has been said that when wealth came to the Prophet his head was turned, while the truth is that when he died his armour was found pledged for a few seers of barley. The Holy Prophet in short had had the experience of being poor as well as rich, but in either case he lived up to his own high ideal, and wealth made no difference to him—so that even when he was rich he lived in poverty.

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The Prophet's Married Life

Let us turn now to his married life. When he was single he lived up to such a high ideal that the world wonders over it to this day. He did not marry until he was twenty-five. This is a late age for marriage in Arabia. In the hot climate of that country boys of sixteen and seventeen years are ripe for marriage. The Holy Prophet, however, not only married later than most young men of his country, but he married a widow as old as forty years. At a time when youth is full of longing he married a woman who had practically run her course of life.

After marriage, Khadija laid all her wealth at the feet of the Prophet. But the first thing the Prophet did was to use the wealth to set free all her slaves, so that after his marriage, as before, the Holy Prophet displayed unequalled moral qualities.

His Marriage with Aisha

In regard to his marriage with Aisha (God be pleased with her) it has been said that the Prophet was an old man while Aisha was a girl barely nine years of age, and so great a disparity between the ages of the two was nothing but tyrannical to Aisha.

Aisha's Own Testimony

First of all, it is not true to say that Aisha was only nine years at the time of her marriage. We have conflicting accounts of Aisha's age. According to the most plausible account she must have been about thirteen, and if some other accounts are to be believed, she might even have been about seventeen years of age. Thirteen, however is the most correct measure. But, even so, she must have been quite young at the time. The point, however, is that the only person to judge or feel the pain of this disparity between husband and wife was Aisha herself. Those Christian writers who have written tearfully about it, cannot have known the pain better than the lady Aisha herself. She married at thirteen. Nine years later, the Holy Prophet died, so that at twenty-two, Aisha was left a widow. Would you say that Aisha had her life ruined by her marriage ? No, because if you try to peep into the depth of Aisha's own heart you find quite another story. You find there nothing but unmixed love for the Holy Prophet. Only see her, years after the Prophet's death. She is rich ; indeed exceedingly so. Gifts pour in from all sides. We have it in the traditions that sometimes she would receive gifts worth lakhs of rupees on a single day. But nothing seems to change her simple mode of living. Whatever she receives on any single day, she gives away in charity before the end of that day. One day we are told, she gave away about a lakh of rupees in the course of a day. A girl friend, learning of this said to her " You are observing a fast to-day, my dear, you might spare at least three or four annas for your evening meal." To which Aisha replied that the good friend who now advised her might have done so a little earlier. Were it not for the love of the Prophet and the deep impression he had made on her, she would certainly have gone on to live a different life, now that she was a woman of means. But she was far and away from changing her very simple ways. On one occasion she had for her meal, *chapatis* baked out of fine flour. Soft and light *chapatis* being a delicacy unknown in the Prophet's days, they ought to have given her all the pleasure she could want out of eating. But, strange it was, she wept as she

ate them. A friend, again, asked her about it and she answered, " I was thinking of the Prophet. That is what made me weep. Were he alive, I would have served him to-day with this soft bread." Just see, how deep the Prophet's impression must have been on her. How many there are who remember their dead like Aisha remembered the Prophet. Every moment of her life was evidence of the affection she bore towards him. Yet there have been people who have suggested that the Prophet was a debauch. Is it thus that the wives of debauchs remember their husbands? Do they not rather, hate the thought of them and regard their death as a prelude to their own salvation?

Courtesies to Wives

The Holy Prophet as a married man, therefore, lived to a noble ideal. In many small ways he treated his wives so as to promote relations of love with them. He would for instance, drink from the cup from which they drank, and touch the cup where they touched it. If they had had to climb on to a height, he would bend his knee, which they would step on and help themselves to the height. The ignorant men of Europe who themselves regard these courtesies a woman's due, begin to complain when they find the Holy Prophet practising the same. That which in any ordinary person they would regard as evidence for the respect he has for womankind, becomes, in the Prophet, evidence of debauchery and pleasure-making.

Lesson to Hussan

Let us, however, go on. We know that when people come to have their own children, they become indifferent to the rights of others. But the Holy Prophet, even in this respect observed an extraordinary measure of austerity. On one occasion a quantity of dates arrived for public charity. The great Hassan his grandson, then a child, put one date in his mouth. But the Prophet said " No, it is not for you, it is for the poor ".

How many people there are, who would conduct themselves

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with such severity? We do not mind children doing such things. Yet here was a child of the Prophet's old age. And he took but one date and put it in his mouth. The Prophet however, did not let him have it. Instead, he took it out of the child's mouth saying, "It is for the poor".

Fatima Disposed of

Fatima was the Prophet's much beloved daughter. Of all his children she was the only one who lived. And she was so exceedingly good that you will find it hard to point to another woman as good as she was. In great distress one day, she went to her father the Holy Prophet and showed him the callosities on her hands which grinding her own corn had given her. "Can't I have a maid to help me?" she asked "now that we are so well off?" The Prophet said "Come Fatima, I will give you something even better" and as he said this, he taught Fatima some words to remember and reflect upon. How many there are, I ask, who have such chaste emotions? The Prophet had no made children. Such as were born had died early, so that he was almost without a child of his own. Fatima was his only daughter and only child. Yet when she comes to him in such distress and asks for help, he a father with the usual paternal instincts, thus disposes of her! In every respect, therefore he was far and above ordinary human beings.

The Prophet at Taif

In showing forbearance to the tyrannies of the enemy, he displayed unequalled largeness of heart. They stoned him on one occasion, and insulted him on another, by throwing on him the entrails of a camel as he prayed silently in the courtyard of the K'aba. When he went to preach to the people of Taif, the Meccans had long before sent word to them to say that a mad man was coming to visit them. These cruel men of Taif set their street boys and their swift dogs on him. The boys volleyed him with stones while the dogs ran furiously at him. You know these *shikár* dogs spare nothing. No wonder, the

Prophet was wounded from head to foot. While returning he heard the voice of God, saying that divine punishment would visit the tyrants if he but desired. But the Prophet said, "No, they are only an ignorant lot."

Amnesty to all Mecca

Whenever they stood in need, the Prophet helped even his enemies ungrudgingly. Nobody who ever approached him was refused. They were always received by him kindly. You remember the tyrannies he had met at the hands of Mecca and its people. Yes, his own town Mecca from where he had to escape quietly at night. And the very same people of this town who had rent asunder the bodies of his companions by tieing them to camels running in opposite directions; who had murdered his womenfolk brutally, thrusting spears into their private parts; and who had tortured his men by dragging them on the burning sands. Yet when these very people were brought to him on the historical occasion of his victorious re-entry into Mecca, all he said was, "This day, no blame attaches to you."

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Another Incident

On another occasion, when he was resting under a tree, his sword hanging from one of its branches, an unrelenting enemy of his got hold of the weapon and waking him up asked "Who can now save you?" To which the Prophet replied "Allah". This simple and short reply and the faith which prompted it struck terror into the man who at once dropped the sword. And now it was the Prophet who picked up the sword and asked, "Who can save you?" The man might have answered as the Prophet had done before, but he merely said, "It lies with you to spare me or not." The Prophet let him go unharmed. There are countless such incidents which leave us wondering, and which together constitute an ideal pattern of life for all men whatever their different callings. In a battle for instance, he saw a wounded woman in the enemy's ranks.

Notwithstanding the fact that she was one of the combatants, he got very angry over it. His companions report that he had never before been so angry. When Muslim combatants went out, it was his wont to remind them of their duty not to touch women, children, old men, nor those who were disabled or diseased, nor monks or priests of any denomination.

The Prophet's Many-Sidedness

He was a judge but one who lost not, in the slightest degree, the confidence of his people.

He was a military commander who not only never made any mistake in his command, but who taught humanity many points in the strategy and ethics of warfare.

He preached without temper, and without the least bitterness in either word or deed. Preachers tend to be clever and sharp-tongued. But not so the Prophet.

Martial Daring with Passion for Peace

He would always hear the other side devotedly. Negotiating for peace, he would accept the humblest terms very much as in fighting, he would display the highest of daring. In the battle of Honein, the whole of the army took to flight. Perhaps it was because the army on this occasion was accompanied by non-Muslim allies, and they did not have the same degree of ardour for the issue as their Muslim fellow-combatants. Whatever it was due to, the whole army took to flight. Only a band of twelve were left with the Prophet. Some of these got hold of the reins of his dromedary, and advised him to run away, "To stay here" they said, "is to plunge ourselves into the well of destruction". But the Prophet refused saying, " Leave me alone. I cannot show my back to the enemy." And then, even while he was so dangerously exposed, he proclaimed, "I am a Prophet ; I am no false one. I am of the progeny of Abdul Muttalib," and advanced as he proclaimed. "In the battle of

Ohod" reports a companion, "I saw one who was drenched in blood. From every side he was being attacked and alone he encountered these attacks. When I went near I found he was no other than the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings of God!)". Of such a valiant character, who can say that when he accepted humiliating terms for peace, he did so out of fear? When the peace of Hodaibiya was being settled, his companions were greatly agitated. Their swords were all but unsheathed over the humiliation they thought they were being put to. Still he said he would have peace and not war.

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The Prophet, you will remember, was engaged in commerce for a time. Here again, we know on the testimony of Khadijah's slaves that nobody ever displayed so high a degree of integrity as he did. The largest profits in the caravan came to him. If his wares were soiled or otherwise inferior, he would himself point out the defect to his customers. So they flocked to him.

Dealings with the Poor

His dealings with the poor and the low were singularly beneficient. Once a man put a rope round the Prophet's neck and asked him for something. The Prophet was far from being offended. All he said was, "I am not niggardly; if I had anything I would have gladly given you of it". He had ten thousand companions at the time. The slightest indication of displeasure on his part would have exasperated them into taking the offender's life. But the Prophet showed not the smallest sign of displeasure, so the companions restrained their exasperation. Do you know of many people who would thus treat their inferiors?

Dealings with the Chiefs and Earthly Potentates

Once a deputation from the tribe of Hatim of Tai came to see and judge for themselves whether it was worth their while to negotiate for a peace with Muslims. The chief of the

deputation had said he wanted to see whether Muhammad was a Prophet or a king. He saw that a poor old woman came and took Muhammad aside. He stood there listening to her for a long time. The chief decided at once that Muhammad was a Prophet not a king. There were ambassadors from other nations present at the time, yet he continued to listen attentively to a poor old woman until she herself broke off and went away. He had to deal with the nobles and the chiefs, as with the poor. In every case he acquitted himself admirably and with due dignity. The Persian Monarch sent orders to the Governor of Yemen for the arrest of Muhammad and his despatch to the Persian Court. The Governor obeyed and sent two men to the Prophet with the message. The men tried to induce the Prophet to go. "We will try," they said, "to see that no comes to you. But to refuse on your part to go will be harm disastrous. Chosroes rules over half the world and if angered, he will work destruction in the whole of Arabia." The Prophet appointed a day for reply. When the men came on the oppointed day to receive their reply, he told them to go and tell their Governor that Muhammad's God had killed the Governor's Monarch. The men said, "Right, we will go back. If what you say, turns out to be true there can be no doubt that you are a true Prophet of God. A few days later, a ship from Persia brought a letter addressed to the Governor of Yemen. The Governor wondered on looking at it, as it bore a new seal. He opened and read, and found it was from the Chosroe's son who tired of his father's tyrannies had deposed and killed him. The letter continued to speak of the cruel orders of the late Chosroes about "a man of Arabia" and said that those should be considered null and void. Mark the Prophet's deference towards a poor old woman and his firmness towards a proud and powerful Monarch.

Dealings with Foreigners

When it came to dealing with foreigners his demeanour was equally appropriate. When Salman the Persian came to him, as a stranger he felt, estranged and ill at ease among Muslims.

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The Prophet however showed his solicitude for him by announcing to his companions, "Salman is one of our own kin," and he could hardly have desired more to reassure himself about his safety.

In short, the Prophet's life is so rich in incident and in the variety of its aspects, that all people whatever their station or situation in life can claim Muhammad as their kindred, as one of themselves.

The Prophet's Kinship to Non-Muslims

Let me admit, however, that the examples I have given can gladden and inspire the heart only of a Muslim one who believes implicitly in the value of the Prophet's teaching, and who will, no doubt, find in the Prophet one who has been through difficulties same as his, and who can now brighten up and make worth while his own journey of life. But how about a non-Muslim, one who does not believe, as a Muslim believes, in the apostleship of Muhammad? What affinity or sense of kinship can he discover in the life of our Holy Prophet ?

Rehabilitation of Earlier Teachings

Remember in this connection, the claim of the Quran according to which all that is best and essential in the teaching of former prophets is embodied in the book. All non-Muslims then, whatever their denominations can regard Muhammad as one of their own, he having rehabilitated as it were, in his own teaching, what was best and lasting in the teaching of his fore-runners.

All Teachers Acknowledged

Also, our Prophet testified to the truth of them all. God taught him and through him all the world that " there has not been a people but have had a warner ".

If all the different peoples of the earth have each had a

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warner, or a Prophet, and if all Prophets as our Prophet further taught, are brethren, are we not justified in concluding that Muhammad is a brother to them all, a kinsman of theirs ? To Rama Chandra as well as to Krishna, to Moses as well as to Jesus, to Zoroaster as well as to Confucius he is but a brother. All of us therefore, whether Indians, Persians, Egyptians, Japanese or Chinese can claim, as the Quranic verse has taught us to claim that Muhammad the Prophet, is one of ourselves. Because Muhammad has testified to the truth of the teachers of all nations much as the followers of these teachers testify to their truth. Muhammad therefore, is one with all the nations of the world. Every nation can regard him as her own. I know of Christian who regard our Prophet as a good Christian. The truth, however, is that our Prophet was only as good a Christian as he was a believer in Moses or a believer in Buddha or a believer, for that matter, in any other great teacher. He was one and all of these at the same time, because he was a Muslim, and because a Muslim is one who believes in all the great truths vouchsafed by God to His Prophets. While the Quran claims that Muhammad the Prophet is one of us, the life of Muhammad, in all its various bearings, offers one continuous proof of this claim.

THIRD EXCELLENCE

Sensitiveness to Others' Distress

The third excellence of our Prophet pointed out by the Quran is contained in the words " Hard for him to bear is your distress." The original which I have rendered as " hard " contains the further sense that the Prophet wants to see you raised high up in the moral scale. Both senses are important. I propose to show you how solicitous the Prophet was about the distress of others and how equally solicitous he was about seeing his people raised to a great moral and spiritual height.

Incident about Abu Bakr

On one occasion, Abu Bakr was talking to a Jew. The Jew

claimed superiority for Moses over Muhammad, upon which Abu Bakr gave him a blow. The Jew brought the complaint to the Prophet who admonished Abu Bakr saying, " Don't quarrel for my superiority over others." It has been said by some that the incident belongs to the earlier part of his life, to a time in fact, when he did not regard himself superior to Moses. This, however, is a mistake. The Prophet knew from the first day the distinctiveness of his rank. In the admonition to Abu Bakr he taught his followers not to say things which may prove hurtful to others. Great therefore was his concern for the feelings of others. What he meant when he admonished Abu Bakr was that his superiority such as God had conferred on him, was something to be properly inculcated in the course of preaching, nor something to quarrel about in an excited discussion. If this caution was not observed the respect which he wanted Muslims to pay to the great teachers the world has known, was liable to be obscured. The Prophet taught us to respect the teachers respected by others, and not to talk lightly of them, nor to find faults with them. He even forbade disrespect to idols, the gods set up by their worshippers as being equal to the One True God. Says the Quran, " Do not talk disrespectfully of even the idols of others, for their worshippers will in turn talk disrespectfully of Allah and will thus unknowingly earn the wrath of Allah."

What a high regard for justice and fair dealing this !

Respect for Feelings of the Enemy

The inculcation of fair dealing with the enemy is equally wonderful. We are taught to act justly even in time of war. If anybody wrongs us we are allowed to wrong him to an equal extent but not more, and if the party show the slightest inclination for peace we are expected to call off the dispute, even though the issue is likely to be decided in our favour. The practical effect of this teaching is writ large on the pages of history. Not a single instance is known to history of Muslims having rejected an offer of peace. The draft of the peace of

Hodaibiya was being dictated by the Prohpet, and Ali the scribe wrote, " *The conditions of peace between Muhammad the Prophet of God, and...*" But the disbelievers took exception to the words *Prophet of God.* The Prophet, accordingly, ordered Ali to cross out the words. But Ali did not do so, whereupon the Prophet himself took the pen and crossed out the objectionable words. He might not have done so at all. He might have replied, for instance, that the words in question were being recorded over his own name. They were his, and the enemy were not being asked to subscribe to them. But the Prophet was mindful of the enemy's feelings and wanted peace before everything else.

The Prophet's Solicitude for the Oppressed : Slaves, Women and the Depressed Classes

At the advent of the Prophet, there were three classes of people who were being particularly maltreated. These were the slaves, the women and the depressed classes. He brought freedom to them all. And why not ? "Hard it was for him to bear others' distress." He could not possibly have tolerated the tyranny and torture to which these classes were being subjected. So not until he had freed them all did he rest. When killing of slaves was considered nothing heinous, he ordered that slaves who were maltreated shall be set free. Further, the slaves were to be fed and clothed in the same manner as their masters and were not to be asked to do what the masters themselves would not do. If a master, for instance, would not do scavenging himself, he had no right to ask his slave to do it. Futher the slaves were to be helped in whatever they were asked to do. In this way, the Prophet cut short by a stroke, as it were, the miseries of slavery. He further taught his followers to set the slaves free as an act of benevolence, or let them off in return for compensation. He tolerated slavery only in the shape of prisoners of war, and who will not put prisoners of war under same sort of restraint? and yet hope to restrict warfare in the world? He ruled that nobody could be a slave all his life. This was

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absolutely forbidden. A slave was a slave only so long as he did not pay his indemnity or was not set free in some other way. The lawfulness of taking prisoners of war and restricting their liberty is certainly recognised by Islam. And nobody can blame it for this, because without it, a people would either put an end to their own existence or else, others would bring them to naught.

Solicitude for Women

Then take the other class of the oppressed—the women. How pitiable was their plight! They were but chattels and were treated and divided as part of one's inheritance. Baby girls were buried alive in the earth. In short they were treated as a wretched and fallen lot. The Prophet taught, "The best amongst you is he who is best towards his womenfolk," and thus suceeded in righting the wrongs from which women were suffering. I cannot give details, but only the broad principles. He protected the interest of girls by teaching that whosoever had but two daughters and he gave them proper education and good moral training, will have his abode in paradise. About mothers, he taught that not the slightest disrespect was to be shown to them. In short, in the words of the Holy Quran, hard it was for the Prophet to bear their distress.

Solicitude for the Depressed Classes

The third class of people whom he liberated were those usually called the depressed. Of them he said: "The high in rank in God's view are those who are high in morals." That is to say, they were not to think of one as high and another as low. In the eyes of God, height of rank was determined by the height of one's moral works. How great and grand these words! Simple; yet all at once they seem to raise the most depressed class to the highest height conceivable. If even to-day there be present in this meeting those who belong to such classes, I will tell them that Muhammad the Prophet has had his heart sorely afflicted by your troubles. So he gave the world the charter of your freedom.

National Rivalries Condemned

Then again, some people regard themselves superior to others. For instance, Americans to-day, seem to regard themselves as being different from ordinary men. The pain which these superior airs on the part of any people could inflict on others is well minded in the teaching of Islam.

"It does not become an advanced people," says the Quran "to look down upon another less advanced. It is possible, tomorrow the advanced may come to a fall and the less advanced go forward. This has been so from the earliest times. Now one people, now another come to the fore. Therefore treat one another with respect."

The Holy Prophet, to conclude, established in the world, a grand conception of humanity. He liberated humanity from all its fundamental iniquities, and this is just the claim which the Quran has made for the Prophet. For addressing all mankind, it has said of the Prophet: "Hard it is for him to bear your distress."

FOURTH EXCELLENCE

Solicitude For Ends Not Means

The fourth excellence pointed out in the verse is contained in the words "solicitous about you". It is a most remarkable distinction of our Holy Prophet. The Prophet's solicitude about us *men*, means that his care and concern was the widest human good, not the success of his teaching or the victory of his principles. A common failing amongst human leaders is to exaggerate their devotion to a single principle. They forget what ends the principle was to secure and whether the principle when applied to any concrete instance will in fact secure those ends. To them, the success of the principle becomes the main thing to achieve. You know for instance, the wrangles between our native *hakims*, and the newly trained doctors. You know how unreservedly they condemn one another. You know also what homeopathic physicians think and say of

those who practise allopathy. They seem to think that when God has endowed small doses with efficacious powers, what good can there be in administering large doses ? The allopathic practitioners, they say, must be anything but solicitous about human health if they administer to their patients such excessive doses. Those who thus wrangle between themselves forget that God has endowed all kinds of things with potentiality for human good. Was not the late Lala Lajpat Rai taken very ill at one time in his life? Did he not have all the great doctors try their knowledge and skill at curing him? and did they not all fail? And did he not at last go to the blind *hakīm* of Delhi and got well? Sir Muhammad Iqbal also was taken ill at one time. He had a stone and the big doctors could not help him, while the blind *hakīm* was able to effect a cure. Similarly we know of cases over which our *hakīms* spend years without being able to find a cure, but which when handed over to a doctor begin to recover rapidly. If our *hakīms* and doctors cared first and last for human life, they would not cling to their own respective principles, but would each try to see whatever of value there is in the system of the other. The doctor finding his methods inedequate would turn for advice to the *hakīm* and the *hakīm* similarly would turn to the doctor. Instead of this, everybody seems concerned to prove the superiority of his own special science. Whether in the course of this effort the patient lives or dies, does not seem to matter to them.

Islamic Teaching Provides for Suitable Alternatives

The Quran appropriately describes Muhammad as being primarily solicitous about *us*, our good and our welfare. We find this solicitude for us running throughout his teaching. It is enjoined on us for instance, to pray standing, but if we cannot do so, we may pray sitting, or if necessary even lying down. Nor do we have to give in charity in the course, say of a year, any specific amount of money but only what suits our situation, so much so that if we can afford nothing, we may rest content

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merely with the goodness of the heart. In short, the Muslim teaching is capable of a wonderful adaptability to varying conditions of life. But I cannot go into details as I have told you before. The Muslim teaching as to fasting, pilgrimage, legal alms, and other such things, provides for suitable alternatives. Charity and *Jehad* also have alternatives, and you could earn the pleasure of God without them as well as you could, with them. The Holy Prophet once going on *Jehad* said "There are people who have not joined us, but not a valley that we cross, in which they are not present with us, and not a reward that we reap in which they are not our co-sharers.

The companions enquired how it was that without the actual privations of *Jehad* such people could reap the same reward as the others. The Prophet answered, "I was thinking of the maimed and the crippled, who grieve in their hearts over their inability to join *Jehad.* God will not withhold from them the reward of actually joining it."

The teaching of our Prophet provides for the spiritual requirements of all men, situated in all conditions of life. It does not inculcate just one principle and adherence to just that principle. It inclucates broad principles which can be suitably adapted to varying situations and which are calculated primarily to secure salvation for man.

FIFTH EXCELLENCE

Thankful to Those Whom he Serves

The fifth great quality of our Prophet, pointed in the verse is contained in the words "to the believers compassionate, merciful". A common human failing is that when a leader lays the world or any particular people under some sort of a debt, he begins to expect some recognition and thankfulness on the part of those indebted to him. He expects them to acknowledge whatever he has done for them. But as the Quran points out, the Holy Prophet is far above this human failing. Instead of expecting acknowledgment and thanks from those whom he lays under his debt, he himself feels grateful and indebted to them, and wants to serve them all the more. Being good to

others, he feels as though it is the others who are being good to him. He is thankful to others when others have more cause to be thankful to him.

It is the very highest pinnacle of spiritual greatness, and only he can reach it who cares not for personal greatness, who is a *rasul*, a messenger who stands up not on his own account but on account of the compelling message he receives from on high.

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I am sorry I cannot go into any more details. Partly because I am beginning to feel very weak, partly because the sun is growing pale, and I think I have taken too long a time already, partly also because I think I have succeeded in presenting you with a number of determinate points about the life of our Holy Prophet. I believe that these may provide to many of you food for further thought. If some of you are induced to find more points of interest and importance in this great subject, I should consider the effort I have made this afternoon as highly snccessful. Of course, if God gives it to me, I may on another occasion, present such other points of interest as I have not been able to present to-day.

Last Words

Before I sit down, I want to say just one thing more. It is that you cannot hope to wipe out differences and disagreements from your midst. As long as Muslims or, for that matter, other communities continue to make the removal of disagreements, a condition prior to any inter-sectional or inter-communal peace, so long will there be no peace at all. The only way to peace is the way taught by the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God !). That is to make peace while we continue to hold to our differences of belief and attitude. To Muslims particularly I would say, that if you care for inter-sectional peace, you should deliberately recognise such mutual differences as there are amongst us, and then unite in all matters which supply a common bond or a common interest to us. For to our success and salvation there is no other way.

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LANDMARKS IN THE PROPHET'S LIFE

Dates.	Important details.
A. D. 545 ... Aetat 1—12	The Prophet's father, Abdullah born.
A. D. 570 ...	The Prophet born on Monday, 20th August, 12th Rabi' I, about 55 days after the attack on Mecca by Abraha, the governor of Yemen. Shortly after birth made over to Thuweiba, the slave of Abu Lahab. After being nursed for a few days by Thuweiba, entrusted to the care of Halima who nursed him for about five years.
A. D. 575-576 ..	The Prophet's mother Amina dies at a place called Abwa between Mecca and Medina.
A. D. 576 ...	Abdul-Muttalib undertakes charge of the Prophet.
A. D. 578 ...	Abdul-Muttalib dies and consigns to his son Abu-Talib the guardianship of the Prophet.
A. D. 582 ...	Twelve years of age, the Prophet accompanies Abu Talib to Syria.
Aetat 12—40	When about 25 the Prophet accompanies a Syrian caravan in charge of Khadija's venture and is married to her shortly afterwards.
A. D. 605 ...	Rebuilding of the Ka'ba. The Prophet about 35 years of age, fixed the Black Stone in its present place in the Ka'ba.
Aetat 40—43 A. D. 609—612	
A. D. 609 ...	The Prophet (40 years old) receives the First Revelation, sees Waraka who comforts him. Earliest converts :—Khadija, 'Abu Bakr, 'Ali, Zaid, Sa'd, Zobair, Talha, Othman, Abdur Rahman, son of 'Auf, Abu Obeida, Othman, son of Ma'zun, Abu Selma, Obeida, son of Al-Harith.

Dates.	Important details.
Aetat 44-45 A. D. 613-14 A. D. 613 ...	The Prophet puts up in the house of Al-Arkam, in aftertimes styled the House of Islam.
Aetat 45—50 A. D. 614—620 A. D. 615 ...	First emigration to Abyssinia of 11 men and 4 women including Othman and the Prophet's daughter, Roqiyya, Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf and Abullah bin Masud, etc., and their return to Mecca after three months.
A. D. 615-16 ... A. D. 615 ...	Second emigration to Abyssinia, Conversion of Hamza.
A. D. 615-16 ...	Conversion of Omar, then 33 years of age and the last to accept Islam in the house of Al-Arkam. The total number of Muslim men at Mecca 40 at the time.
A. D. 616-17 ...	On first night of the first month of the seventh year of his Mission, the Hashimites, including the Prophet and his family, with the descendants of Al-Muttalib retired into the Shi'b (quarter) of Abu Talib.
A. D. 617—619 ...	The Prophet and his party confined to the Shi'b.
A. D. 619 ..	Ban removed. Death of Khadija (December A. D. 619).
A. D. 620 ...	Death of Abu Talib (January A. D. 620). 15 days after the Prophet goes to Taif and is expelled from the city. Marries Sauda and is betrothed to Ayesha. Meets pilgrim party from Medina (March A. D. 620). First pledge of Al-Akaba by men of Medina (April A. D. 620).
A. D. 621 ...	Spread of Islam at Medina and Mus'ab deputed to instruct converts.
Aetat 52-53 A. D. 621-622 ...	The Prophet's (Mi'raj) Ascension. Preparations for Second Pledge of Al-Akaba (March 622 A. D. 10th year of the Call). Muslims continue to fly to Medina.

Dates.	Important details.
A. H. 1.—June A. D. 622 to January A. D. 623.	Flight of the Prophet and Abu Bakr to Medina (June 20, A. D. 622). Arrive Medina Monday 12th Rabin 'I, June 28. The Prophet stays in Abu Ayyub's house for seven months. Marries Ayesha.
A. H. 1, 2.—A. D. 623.	The Prophet's Treaty with the Jews at Medina by which they undertook not to go to war without his permission and to refer to his decisions all their disputes and controversies. Five daily prayers fixed. The Kibla changed to the Ka'ba (A.H. 2—Nov. A. D. 623). Fast of Ramazan instituted (December, A. D. 623). Permission to fight the infidels given.
A. H. 2.—January A. D. 624.	The Battle of Badr, one of the greatest battles in all human history. Islam victorious, infidels put to flight, their leaders killed. Muslims about 300 and the Meccans 1,000. The death of the Prophet's daughter Roqiyya.
Ramazan, A. H. 2, to Sha'ban, A. H. 3, —A. D. 624.	Beni Kainuka' besieged, surrendered and forgiven. Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf meets his death. The Prophet marries Hafza (Nov. 624 A. D.). Marriage of Fatima with 'Ali.
Shawwal, A. H. 3,— January, A. D. 625.	In order to avenge their defeat at Badr the Koreish march from Mecca, January A. D. 625. The Battle of Ohod. The Muslims 1,000, the Meccans 3,000. The issue indecisive.
A. H. 4.—A. D. 625	Muslim party cut to pieces at Bi'r-Mauna (May, A. D. 625). Beni an-Nazeer ordered into exile, June A. D. 625.
The fourth and fifth years of the Hijra ; or from the middle of A. D. 625 to the end of A. D. 626.	The Prophet marries Zainab bint Khozeima, Umm-i-Salama and Zainab bint Jahsh. The *purdah* enjoined on Muslim ladies. Beni Mustalik attacked and captured. The Prophet marries Juweiriya. Ayesha slandered and cleared by divine revelation.

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Dates.	Important details.
February-March A. D. 627.	The Koreish joined by Bedawin tribes march upon Medina. Beni Koreiza desert the Muslims. The Battle of the Trench. The Koreish raise the siege and march away. Beni Koreiza besieged by the Prophet and surrender. Their slaughter ordered by Sa'd bin Mo'az.
Sixth year of the Hijrat A. D. 627-628.	Abul 'As husband of the Prophet's daughter, Zainab, accepts Islam. Bani Judham chastised for robbing Dihya, sent by the Prophet on an embassy to Syria.
Dhul-Ka'da A.H. 6—March A. D. 628.	To fulfil his dream the Prophet with 1,500 Muslims starts for Mecca to perform Lesser Pilgrimage. The Koreish oppose his advance. The Prophet encamps at Hodeibiya. Truce of Hodeibiya signed. The Muslims come back to Medina, without Performing the Pilgrimage. Beni Khoza'a enter into alliance with the Prophet. Embassies sent to Heraclius, Gassanid Prince, King of Persia and to the Mukaukis, the Roman Governor of Egypt. The Persian Governor of Yemen ordered to arrest the Prophet, himself accepts Islam. Despatch to the King of Abyssinia and to Chief of Yemama.
A. H. 7—August and September A. D. 628.	Expedition against Kheibar. Fall of Kheibar. The Prophet marries Safiya. Partakes of a poisoned kid. Abyssinian refugees reach Medina. The Prophet marries Umm-i-Habiba.
A. H. 7—February A. D. 629.	The Prophet sets out on Lesser Pilgrimage. Enters Mecca, performs circuit of Ka'ba. Public prayers performed at the Ka'ba. The Prophet marries Meimuna. Khalid and 'Amr-bin Al-'As accept Islam.
A. H. 8,—A. D. 629 *contd.*	Muslim army marches upon Muta. Ja'far and Zaid killed in the battle.

Dates.	Important details.
Ramazan A. H. 8—January A. D. 630.	Beni Bakr, an ally of the Meccans attack Beni Khoza'a, an ally of the Prophet A. H. 8, December A. D. 629. Truce of Hodeibiya violated by the Koreish. The march on Mecca begins, January 1, 630 A. D. Fall of Mecca. Amnesty proclaimed by the Prophet. Bloodshed strictly prohibited. Battle of Honein. The Beni Hawazin defeated, their families and camp captured, but eventually set at liberty. The Prophet despatches letters to the Chiefs of Al-Bahrein, 'Oman and the Yemen.
A. H. 8—10,—A. D. 630, 631.	The Prophet marries Mary, the Copt. Ibrahim born A. H. 8, April A. D. 630. Dies A. H. 10 June or July A. D. 631.
First half of the 9th year of the Hijrat—April 20 to September A. D. 630.	Conversion of the son of Hatim of Tai. July A. D. 630. Deputations from Arab tribes A. H. 9, 10.—A. D. 630, 631. The ninth year of the Hijrat called 'the year of deputations'.
Second half of the ninth year of the Hijrat—October, A. D. 630, to April, A. D. 631.	Gathering of Roman feudatories on Syrian border. March for Tabuk, September, October A. D. 630. Treaty with Christian Prince of Ayla. The Prophet returns to Medina, December A. D. 630. Death of Abdullahibn Obei.
A. H. 10,—A. D. 630, 631.	Numerous embassies during 10th year. Different Arabian tribes and Chiefs visit the Prophet and accept Islam. Embassy from Najran, A. H. 10. Farewell pilgrimage, A. H. 10, March A. D. 630.
Opening of A. H. 11, —April and May A. D. 632.	Three impostors, Toleiha, Museilima and Al-Aswad arise. The first eventually accepted Islam, the last two were crushed, Museilima in the time of Abu Bakr.
A. H. 11,—June A. D. 632.	Expedition to Syrian frontier. Osama appointed to command, May 25, A. D. 632. The Prophet passes away June 8, A. D. 632.

N. B.—'Aetat' means "at the age of".
'A. H.' „ "after the Prophet's Hijrat" (Flight) to Medina. Denotes beginning of Muslim Calendar.
'A. D.' „ "In the year of our Lord." Denotes Christian Calendar.

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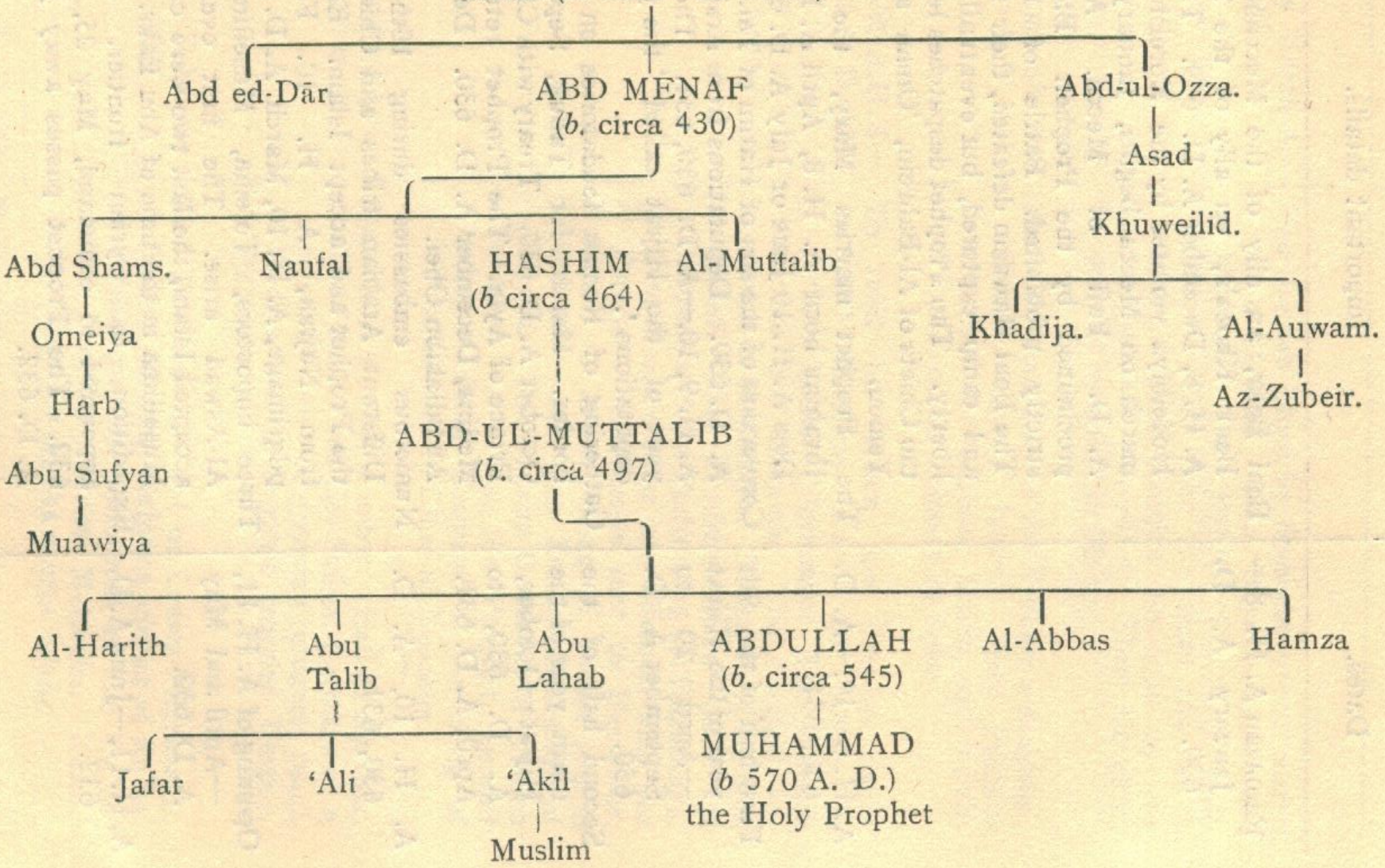
THE PROPHET'S PEDIGREE

THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS THE LINEAGE OF THE HOLY PROPHET—*Ed.*



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*NOTES ON THE HOLY QURAN

Suratul-Baqarah—II

(*f*) As different religions have pointed out different ways of salvation, there has, therefore, sprung up quite a variety of definitions of the word *Muttaqi*. The Christians, the Hindus and the Muslims have each a different conception of this term. According to Islam, however, *Muttaqi* is described in the next verse as having the following six distinguishing marks:—

1. Belief in the 'unseen'.
2. Worship of Allah.
3. Kindness to God's creatures.
4. Faith in what is sent down to the Holy Prophet of Arabia.
5. Faith in what was sent down before the Holy Prophet.
6. Firm faith in what was yet to follow.

These six characteristics may be reduced to three principles which contain in them the quintessence of all religions:—(*i*) Faith in certain things beyond our perception. They are called *'Aqāid* (beliefs) (*ii*) Actions (*A'māl*) which pertain, on one side, to the worship of God and, on the other, to kindness to God's creatures, and (*iii*) belief in revelations (*Wahy*).

The possession of these three characteristics entitles a man to the name *Muttaqi* (the God-fearing). This refers

*Under this heading will continue to appear regularly in every issue of the *Review of Religions* explanatory notes on the Holy Quran. These "notes" will comprise translation and detailed and comprehensive explanation of the Quranic verses, beginning with Sura-tul-Fatiha and will be written by the famous writer and theologian, Maulana Sher Ali B. A., aided and helped by the *dars* of the Quran which the persent Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, has been giving from time to time at Qadian. In this way, we hope, by the grace of God, to bring out, in due course, a complete and exhaustive commentary of the Quran.—*Ed. R. R.*

to the obvious fact that the Holy Quran does not merely enable persons to become God-fearing, but takes them to far higher stages in spiritual development, and that the Quranic measure of guidance is not exhausted in the attainment of this stage, but a great deal yet remains to be attained.

The question naturally arises. What further guidance does the Holy Quran offer to its followers when the stage of اتقاء (ittiqā) has been reached. The question has been answered by the Holy Qur-ān itself. It says elsewhere:—

والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا (العنكبوت)

"But as for those who have striven in our cause, We will assuredly lead them to Our ways" (XXIX, 70). *i.e.* God leads to Himself those who strive to establish connection with Him. The same thing is expressed in the words هدى للمتقين "Guidance for the *Muttaqin*" *i. e.* the Holy Qur-ān does not only enlighten mankind on such doctrines and deeds as are the means of obtaining salvation but it furthermore enables its followers to enjoy personal communion with God. When they spare no pains to obey divine behests, God Himself invites them to His bliss and speaks to them in His sweet and comforting voice. As a result, the faith hitherto based only on arguments and reasons turns into conviction rooted in observation and experience. In short, by holding out an unfailing promise of further guidance to the *Muttaqi* God has set forth an undeniable proof for the truth of the Holy Qur-ān. It can be viewed from different standpoints. First, all other religions of the world regard the perfection of human actions as the ultimate goal of religion. They do not claim to take their votaries any further. Islam, however, does not stop here, but claims to lead its followers far beyond this limit. Secondly, unlike other religions, it makes its truth manifest in all fulness even in this world. Those who faithfully follow the teachings of Islam witness the truth of it even in their life-time. God reveals to them His pleasure. What can be more gratifying for a believer than to hear from God Himself that the path he is following is right and that

the religion he professes has proceeded from God. His faith thus becomes deepened and strengthened to a degree beyond the perception of the followers of other religions.

(*g*) The connecting link between this and the previous Chapter is the prayer اهدنا الصراط المستقيم "Guide Thou us on the right path," which is addressed to God in the previous and meets with divine acceptance in this chapter. 'Guide us on the right path' is the prayer contained in the previous Chapter and, quite agreeably to that prayer, this Chapter holds out the glad tidings: هدى للمتقين *i.e.* "Here is a guidance for the God-fearing."

الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويقيمون الصلوٰة ومما رزقنهم ينفقون

4. Alladhīna yu'minúna bil ghaibi wa yuqīmúnas-ṣaláta wa mim-má razaqná hum yunfiqún.

4. Who believe in the unseen and observe prayer, and expend out of what We have provided them with. 19.

19. (*a*) *Yu'minúna* is derived from *īmán* which means "to acknowledge, to believe, to believe firmly with the heart". When the verb is followed by the preposition ب (bá) as in the present verse, it means " to believe in or to have firm faith in". In that case it is used with the names of things on a true belief in which depends the salvation of man. Thus we say يؤمنون بالله " they believe in Allah". يؤمنون بالغيب ' *Yu'minuna bil-ghaibi*' means 'they believe in the unseen'. غيب *Ghaib* (the unseen) means " anything that is hidden from the eye". The word does not signify that the thing is imaginary and undemonstrable by reason. In fact, all the matters of faith, *i. e.* the things we are required to believe in have a shade of secrecy about them ; for instance, God, angels, revealed books, divine messengers and the life to come. Revealed books and divine messengers belong to this category, for their truth and the fact of their having been sent by God are hidden matters. ' Belief in the unseen' does not mean 'belief in imaginary things, of the existence of which there is no proof,' for the Holy Quran expressly declares it to be an error to believe

in a thing without any reason. For instance, it says قل ارونی الذین الحقتم به شرکاء (سبا : ع ۳) "Say, Show me those whom you have classed with Him as partners." (XXXIV : 28.) Again :—"Bring me a book *revealed* before this, or any trace of knowledge, if you speak the truth" (XLVI, 5). Again :—"And follow not that which thou hast no knowledge of, for the hearing, the sight and the heart—all of these shall be questioned about." (XVII, 35.)

Again :—"Have We sent down to them any authority which speaks of that which they associate with Him ?" (XXX, 36.)

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Again :—"Say, therefore, Allah's is the most effective argument." (VI, 151.)

The above quotations clearly show that when God requires us to believe in the unseen, He does not mean that we should believe in anything unreasonable and proofless.

It is, therefore, wrong, to suppose as the Rev. Dr. Wherry has done in his commentary, that Islam like Christianity forces upon its followers sundry mysteries of faith and that, therefore, they have no right to refuse to believe in (irrational) mysteries like *Trinity in Unity* and the Sonship of Christ.

Bil ghaib also means "in private", or "in secret'." Hence *Yu'minūna bil ghaibi* also means that they should be sincere in their faith. They should not only profess to be believers before men, but faith should be firmly rooted in their hearts, so that even when they are alone they should find themselves to be true believers.

(*b*) The Arabic word يقيمون (observe) literally means 'are steadfast in', 'put in a right state', and 'set up' (*vide* Lisān-ul-Arab, Vol. XV. and Tājul 'Arūs, Vol. VII. P. 35.) Thus the sentence means that the God-fearing are steadfast in their prayers, *i. e.* on the one hand, they are regular and punctual in observing their prayers, and on the other hand they observe them not imperfectly but thoroughly. صلوٰۃ (salāt) means *prayer*, and when ascribed to God it means

mercy. But technically, ṣalāt implies the five daily devotions which are binding upon every Muslim adult-male or female. Whenever in the Holy Qur-ān, the word (صلوٰۃ) ṣalāt has been used with verbs formed from the root *iqámat* such as *Yuqimúna*, etc., it signifies the five daily prayers.

(*c*) رزقنا *Razaqnā* is derived from رزق *rizq* which means 'to give" ' to bestow.' Thus رزقت علما means ' I have been given knowledge.' رزق (Rizq) also means ' a portion, share, lot'. The Holy Qur-ān says وتجعلون رزقكم انكم تكذبون (واقعه ع۳) 'and do you make your portion to be disacknowledgment'. (LVI, 83) (*vide* Mufridāt i-Rāghib). It also means ' maintenance'.

ينفقون is derived from انفاق (*infāq*) which means ' to spend', to 'expend one's substance', ' to spend money continually', ' to make a commodity acceptable and adapted to the taste of the people so that it commands a ready sale'. The root of this verb conveys the idea of commutation and spending up. Thus the sentence ومما رزقنهم ينفقون means: "They continue to spend out of that which We have bestowed upon them".

In this sentence, the God-fearing person is enjoined to expend out of what God has given him, for the welfare of mankind. This means sympathy and mutual help in their widest possible sense, for the verse is comprehensive and includes all kinds of gifts that man receives from his Maker. Thus wealth, power, influence, government, physical and intellectual faculties, in short, all that one may have received from God must, in part at least, be devoted to the well-being of His creatures.

The injunction has another equally important aspect. The God-fearing care to possess only what God bestows upon them. God-given things are those of our belongings which are obtained in strict compliance with God's will. It is, therefore, absolutely forbidden to earn or collect money by unfair means or by begging and then to spend it for the welfare of human beings. This injunction condemns

the detestable practice of hoarding money by means of fraud and other designs of trickery and cheating, and making large donations to charitable funds out of the wealth thus amassed, with no object but to win popular applause. Under the injunction, a God-fearing person is bound to earn whatever he can by honest means and to give away a portion of it to relieve the poor and the needy.

This part of the verse also teaches us that we should never hoard wealth, but should always lay it out in trade and thus benefit mankind by it. Islam does not approve of the amassing of wealth and imposes upon it the poor-rate (Zakāt) so that the poor and the needy may benefit by it at least in this way.

This verse gives three directions for the spiritual welfare of man. First of all, he should be firm of faith. Secondly, he should be always engaged in serving God and in prayer. Thirdly, he should be kind to God's creatures and should not be niggardly of what God has been pleased to confer on him, whether it be wealth, knowledge or any other gift of God. If a man has been given some knowledge and he does not benefit other people by it, he acts in contravention of this verse. Similarly, if a man knows some profession or art and does not like to teach it to others, he is not *Muttaqí* according to this verse.

والذين يؤمنون بما أنزل اليك وما أنزل من قبلك۔ وبالاخرة هم يوقنون۔

5. *Walladhīna yu'minúna bi-mā unzila ilaika wa mā unzila min qablika wa bil ākhirati hum yuqinún.*

5. And who believe in what has been revealed to thee and what was revealed before thee, and have firm faith in what is yet to follow.[20]

20. (*a*) In يؤمنون بالغيب *Yu'minuna bil ghaibi* 'who believe in the unseen', mention was made of faith in general and included belief in God, the prophets, the revlealed books and the life to come. Belief in God implies the acceptance and observance of His commandments; belief in

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the messengers of God implies obedience to their injunctions; and belief in the life to come implies the necessity of making preparation for it. After making mention of faith in general, God speaks of the details of faith. Faith in general refers to principles and is not affected by any change in circumstances. Such, however, is not the case with the details of faith which undergo a change under changed conditions. For instance, when a prophet of God appears, it is only necessary to believe in that prophet, and the revelation of God to which he summons the people and the prophets that have gone before him and their revelations. But when he is followed by another prophet, it becomes binding to believe in the new prophet also, over and above previous prophets and their revelations Thus the details of faith undergo a change under altered conditions, and for the attainment of *Taqwā* it becomes necessary not only to believe in the prophets that have gone before but also in the prophet of the day. This shows that the definition of *Muttaqī* (the God-fearing) is always changing. Persons who were *Muttaqī* before the advent of a new messenger and accepted all the prophets of God cease to be so if they reject the prophet who appears in their time. Thus, in the verse under comment we have been told that now that the Holy Prophet has appeared, one cannot attain *Taqwā* unless one believes in him and the divine revelation which he has brought, over and above the previous prophets and their revelations.

In the verse the words ما انزل اليك 'what has been revealed to thee' have been placed before the words ما انزل من قبلك 'what was revealed before thee', for now that the Holy Qurān has been revealed, one cannnot believe in the previous prophets or act upon their teaching directly, but this can be done only through the medium of the Holy Qurān and through the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!) and because now only that portion of the previous books can be held as acceptable which has been attested by the Holy Qur-ān and is included

in it, and it is not necessary to believe in what is beside that.

(*b*) Some Christian writers have stumbled at the significance of this verse. They seem to think that the words 'what was revealed before thee' refer only to the Bible and that herein Muslims are required to act upon it. This view is *prima facie* absurd. It is enough for a Muslim to follow the Holy Qur-ān which embraces all that the previous scriptures, including the Bible, contained by way of guidance. This verse is not restricted in its signification to the Bible alone, but includes the whole mass of revelations sent down to mankind in all places and all times. The Holy Qur-ān makes the point clear when it says : وان من امة الا خلا فيها نذير-(فاطر : ع ٣) "There has been no people but there has passed among them a warner." (XXXV, 25.) Again, in XVI 37, we read: ولقد بعثنا فى كل أمة رسولا- (النحل ع ٥) 'And indeed We raised among every people a warner.' (XVI, 37.)

This verse does not enjoin the Muslims to believe in the Bible alone, but in all the revelations previous to the Holy Qur-ān. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!) is reported to have treated the Zoroastrians as 'the people of the book', and likewise, during the earlier days of Islam, the Hindus, too, were looked upon as such. Thus any pre-Islamic book which is claimed by a large section of human beings to have proceeded from God will be allowed to pass for a revealed book within the meaning of the verse under discussion, because God says that no nation has passed without witnessing the appearance of a prophet.

As to the question of guidance, we have the clear word declaring the Holy Qur-ān as the only book of guidance now and for all time to come, which dispenses with the necessity of looking to other books for guidance. A reference to the earthly modes of government will serve to illustrate the point we are considering. Wordly governments enact many laws to meet the exigencies of time and afterwards repeal

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them. We continue to look upon the repealed laws as the statutes of government, but do not act upon them. The fact that the repealed laws are now a dead letter cannot, however, be taken to mean that they were not framed by government but are only the inventions of the people. Similarly, before Islam, there were sent by God many laws which He subsequently abrogated. As the Holy Qur-ān is now the only book of guidance for us, we are cautioned against supposing the previous scriptures to be books of men and the prophets mentioned therein to be (God forbid) impostors. Moreover, it is clearly enjoined upon us that, along with a belief in this revelation (the Qurān), we must preserve our faith in the previous prophets and their revelations. This being the case, it is foolish to infer that the Muslims are required to follow the Bible, because in that case they will also have to follow the Vedas and the Zend-Avesta. The fact is that the Muslims are warned against thinking that there was no scripture revealed prior to the Holy Qur-ān or that the former prophets were impostors. They are, on the other hand, required to believe that the previous prophets were true prophets and the revelations received by them were from God. The point can be easily understood by a reference to the attitude of Christians towards the Old Testament. They believe that all the books included in the Old Testament are Divine Books, yet they do not act upon them, because they consider the Old Testament as cancelled on the advent of Christ.

(*c*) الاخرۃ *Al-ākhirat* literally means that which is to come after. Now the question is, what is it that is to come after. There are two things which have been foretold by the Holy Qur-ān as coming after and which the Muslims are required to believe in. Firstly, the life after death, or the next world, also called الدارالاخرۃ *addārul-ákhirat* (the next world). Secondly, the revelation which is to follow. This has been foretold in the following passage of the Holy Qur-ān :—

هوالذی بعث فی الامیین رسولاً منهم یتلوا علیهم آیاته ویزکیهم ویعلمهم الکتاب

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والحكمة وان كانوا من قبل لفى ضلال مبين- و آخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم وهو العزيز الحكيم- (الجمعة- ع ١)-

"He it is who has raised among the illiterate a messenger from among them, who recites His signs to them, and purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom; whereas before they were certainly in manifest error, and (who will raise a messenger among) the others of them who have not yet joined them; for He is the mighty, the wise." (LXII, 3,4.)

In these verses we have been told that just as the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him), formed a body of men in the days when the Holy Qur-ān was revealed, and recited to them His signs and purified them and taught them the Book and wisdom, similarly he will form another community and recite to them His signs and purify them and teach them the book and wisdom. Here the Holy Qur-ān has clearly spoken of two advents of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!). His first advent took place when the Holy Qur-ān was revealed and given out to the world as a book of guidance for the world. His *second* advent was to take place in the latter days. But by the *second* advent of the Prophet it is not meant that he will himself come for the second time, nor should it be supposed for a moment that the soul of the Holy Prophet will migrate into a second human body. In fact, the second advent of the Holy Prophet means the appearance of one of his followers who, following in his footsteps, will completely lose his individuality in that of the Prophet and thus become one with him. Such a follower will be the reflex of the Holy Prophet himself, and all the excellences of the latter will be found to be mirrored in the former. He will thus be identified with the Prophet himself. The advent of such a one will be the advent of the Prophet, and the achievements of such a follower will be the accomplishments of the master.

When the the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!) recited the verses quoted above from Chapter LXII, he laid his hand on the shoulder of Salman, the Persian, and said

لو كان الايمان معلقا بالثريا لناله رجل من فارس

'If faith should rise to the pleiades, a man of Persia would bring it back.' Thus the Holy Prophet declared that the prophecy would be fulfilled by the advent of a man of Persian origin which would take place at a time when faith would have disappeared from the earth.

Further light is thrown on the point by another prophecy of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!) which is to the effect that in the latter days, when Islam would fall into decay, God would raise a prophet from among his followers who would be called Mahdi and Messiah. In the verse under comment (v. 5 of this Chapter), Muslims have been enjoined to believe in him and his revelation.

It may be mentioned in passing that the Promised one has alreary appeared, and though many have opposed him, yet his mission, like the mission of his prototype, Jesus of Nazareth, is making sure and steady progress, and, like it, bids fair to overspread the whole face of the wide earth. The name of the Promised one is MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN, Punjab, India. He was also a man of Persian origin, in accordance with the prophecy.

As already pointed out, the word *Al-ākhirat* may mean either the life to come or 'the revelation to come' *i. e.* the word of God to be revealed to the man of Persian origin or the Promised Messiah and Mahdi who was to appear in the latter days. The context, however, supports the latter significance in the present verse, for in the preceding portion of the verse God speaks of two revelations, *viz.*, the revelation that was sent down to the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be

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upon him!) and the revelation that was sent down to the previous prophets. This leads us to conclude that by *Al-ākhirat,* is also meant 'the revelation' that was to come.

Taking this interpretation of *Al-ākhirat,* the whole text means:—"Those who believe in what was sent down to thee and what was sent down before thee, and who have a firm faith in what will be sent down after thee." This verse speaks about revelations and sets forth as a necessary condition of the *Muttaqī* (the God-fearing) that they believe in the revelation given to the Holy Prophet and in all the revelations that preceded him, and have a firm faith in the revelation that will follow him. While the word ایمان *īman* (belief) has been used in reference to the revelations, present and past, the term یقین *Yaqin* (firm faith) has been used in reference to the future revelations, because *īman* (belief) concerns anything fixed and determined, and as the future revelations were not concrete and determinate at the time when the verse was revealed, so the word *Yaqīn* (firm faith) has been properly used with reference to them. By using the word *Yaqīn* it has also been sought to indicate that although the future revelation has not yet come into existance, yet that fact detracts nothing from their faith; on the contrary they have a firm faith therein.

اولئک علی هدی من ربهم- واولئک هم المفلحون-٦

6. *Ula'ika 'alá hudam-mir-rabbihim wa ulá 'ika humul-muflihún.*

6. It is they who follow the guidance from their Lord, and it is they who shall prosper.[21]

21. (*a*) اولئک علی هدی من ربهم Litarally means '*It is they who are on guidance from their Lord.*' Here guidance has been likened to a horse on which one rides. Just as a horse is under the control of the rider, similarly the believers who fulfil the aforementioned conditions attain to that state of perfection when guidance becomes a permanent possession with them and there is no fear of

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their going astray. Guidance is for them like a horse which takes them to their destination. Moreover, that guidance is not of their own device ; it is from the Lord (Rabb). Again the Lord who has sent the guidance is *their* Lord, *i. e.* one with whom they have formed connection, and who being their *Rabb* sustains them at every step, and gradually leads them to perfection. It is a common practice with the Arabs to compare guidance or error to a riding animal and to represent those who take a firm stand on the bed-rock of guidance or error as mounted on that animal. For instance they say :—

جعل فلان الغواية مركبا وامتطى الجهل

' Such a one made error a riding beast and such a one mounted himself on ignorance.' (Aqrabul Mawárid.)

(*b*) مفلحون *Muflihún* (who shall proper) means 'those who have attained what they desired or sought.' Such persons as attain the object of their desire cannot wander astray from the right path. They are mounted on horses of guidance, and as these horses have come from God they are sure to go back to Him, even if they abandon control of them.

(*c*) Verses 4 and 5 give a description of *Muttaqí* for whom the Holy Qur-ān claims to be a guidance, and whom it leads to higher degees of spirituality. A *Muttaqí* is one who believes in the "unseen" but by following the Holy Qur-ān, he rises higher and is made, as it were, to see God—and what was ' unseen' before becomes ' seen'.

Similarly, a *Muttaqi* is one who observes prayer. The Arabic word for ' observe ' is يقيمون *Yuqîmuna* which literally means 'set up, put up, set upright, support'. This implies an effort on the part of the worshipper to say his prayers in the right way. But by following the Holy Qur-án, a *Muttaqí* attains to that stage of spiritual advancement when prayer becomes the delight of his soul so that he no longer stands in need of making any effort to perform it in the proper way. Again *Muttaqí* is one who expends a part of what God has bestowed upon him, for the welfare of

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mankind, but by following the teaching of the Holy Qur-ān, he attains to that stage of perfection when he is able to devote his whole to the service of God and humanity. Again a *Muttaqī* is one who believes in all revelations that come from God ; but by truly following the Holy Qur-ān, he himself becomes the recipient of divine revelation. Thus, by following the Holy Qur-ān, the door is opened to the *Muttaqī* to rise higher and attain to greater spiritual eminence.

If the Holy Qurān is a guidance for the *Muttaqi* (the God-fearing), the question arises, who makes a person *Muttaqī* ? The answer to this question is, that it is the Holy Qurān that makes persons *Muttaqī* also. Those who are not *Muttaqī* are first made *Muttaqī* by the Holy Qur-ān and are afterwards led by it to higher stages. The Holy Qur-ān has been spoken of as شفاء لما فی الصدور (یونس ع٦) " A remedy for what is in the minds" (X, 58), which shows that the diseased are healed by the Holy Qur-ān, or, in other words, those who are not *Muttaqī* are made so by the Holy Book of Islam. In the verse under comment God speaks of the higher function of the Holy Qur-ān, *viz.*, its being a guidance to the God-fearing, and ignores the lesser function, *viz.* that of its leading men to *Taqwá.* No other revealed book claims to lead the *Muttaqī* to higher stages of spiritual progress, so in this respect the Holy Qur-án stands unique among all the revealed books of the world.

ان الذین کفروا سواء علیهم ءانذرتهم ام لم تنذرهم لا یومنون ۔۷

7. *Innalladhína kafarú sawá'un' alai-him a 'andhartahum am lam tundhir hum lā yu'minún.*

7. Surely, those who have disbelieved—while it is alike to them whether thou warn them or warn them not—will not believe.[22]

22. After mentioning the highest stage of belief, God speaks of the extreme type of disbelief in verse 7. This verse means that those disbelievers who are absolutely indifferent to truth so that it is the same to them whether

thou admonish them or do not admonish them will never believe. Disbelievers may become believers only in case they listen to admonitions.

The English translators have made a serious mistake in interpreting this verse. They take the verse to mean that the disbelievers will not believe whether they are admonished or not. This interpretation obviously runs counter to the facts of actual experience and is directly opposed to the teachings of the Holy Qur-án. We know of many disbelievers who afterwards came to believe, and the Holy Qur-ān also says : " He it is who has raised among the illiterate a messenger from among them, who recites His signs to them and purifies them, and teaches them the book and wisdom ; whereas before that they were certainly in manifest error." (LXII, 3.) This verse not only convinces us of the possibility of the true conversion of disbelievers to Islam, but presents it as an historical fact. Certain Christian writers have erroneously inferred from the verse under comment that, according to the Holy Qur-án, some people are arbitrarily destined for hell and, therefore, they have no choice but to stray away from God's guidance. This is positively contrary to the spirit of the Holy Qur-ān which says :—

" They who join gods with Allah say, ' If Allah had pleased we would not have given Him companions, nor our fathers, nor would we have made anything unlawful '. In like manner did those who were before them disbelieve until they tasted of Our punishment. Say, Have you any knowledge that you may produce it to us ? You follow only an opinion and you only speak by conjecture. Say, Therefore, Allah's is the most effective argument ; and if He had willed, He would have surely guided you all." (VI, 150, 151.)

These verses imply that the infidels will say that if God had willed, they and their forefathers would have refrained from setting up equals with Him, nor would they

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have rendered any thing unlawful *i. e.* God's non-interference in their doings clearly showed that He had sanctioned for them what they did and that He had pre-designed the fate for them. The Holy Qur-án continues in reply : (1) Former peoples also said like things till they were overtaken by punishment. It means that if, as they say, God had caused them to set up equals with Him, He would not have punished them for doing so. The simple fact that God chastised the previous peoples for their setting others on a par with Him proves that He did not approve of their actions. (2) The second answer given is that to prove the truth of a statement some argument must be adduced. If, as they say, God forces them to exalt others to the same rank with Him, and so they are unable to give it up, then let them bring forward some argument, but this they cannot do ; for all that they assert is the outcome of mere fancy. (3) God has cogent reasons. From times immemorial, He has been revealing, through His prophets, His words full of deep wisdom and sound arguments, thereby inviting His creatuees to the truth. If, therefore, any compulsion from God had bound the infidels to disbelief, He would not have sent any of the revelations and the prophets. (4) If God had chosen to use force, He would have forced all to follow His guidance. He would not have allowed any of His creatures to set up equals with Himself, nor would He have allowed so much diversity of faith and blasphemy to prevail in the world. Thus, fatalistic predestination is not warranted by the Holy Qur-án, and the verse under comment cannot be interpreted in direct defiance of Islamic principles. It is their lack of due deliberation on the Holy Qur-ān that is responsible for the error into which the translators have fallen, in interpreting verses like the one under discussion. The correct significance of the words is that there is no chance for the disbelievers to believe while they are indifferent to the admonition of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings of God!).

The Ahmadiyya Movement

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THE Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi and the expected Messenger of all nations. In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophets he came to serve and reinterpret the final and eternal teachings laid down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefore represents the true and real Islam and seeks to uplift humanity and establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad died in 1908, and the present Head of the Movement is his second successor, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, under whose direction the Movement has established Missions in many parts of the world, the following being the addresses of some of them :—

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(2) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM,
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(6) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
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(7) THE CENTRAL (E.A.) AHMADIYYA
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